



LAURENCE ALAN BAXTER
(1954–1996)

IN MEMORIAM

Laurence Alan Baxter

Laurence A. Baxter died on November 8, 1996, at the age of 42 after a long struggle with lymphoma sustained with great courage and grace. A citizen of Great Britain, he earned his B.Sc. degree in statistics with First Class Honors in 1975 and his Ph.D. in 1980 from University College London. He joined the faculty at the State University of New York at Stony Brook in 1981 as an assistant professor and was tenured and promoted to associate professor of applied mathematics and statistics in 1985.

Dr. Baxter was internationally renowned for his work in applied probability and reliability theory. He published over 45 papers and did extensive consulting in this area. The results of his work on separately maintained components have been incorporated into a widely used AT & T Bell Laboratories software package for calculating various characteristics of system availability. Dr. Baxter also extended several classic theorems of reliability theory for discrete structures to continuous structures, using functions that he named continuum structure functions. Additionally he did research on the effects of air pollution on mortality.

Dr. Baxter conceived of and was Editor-in-Chief of *Stochastic Modeling*, a series of books published by Chapman and Hall of London from 1993 to the present. He was sought out internationally by publishers of scholarly journals for his outstanding editorial services and served as a reviewer for 30 journals. He was Editor of the *Applied Probability Newsletter* and Associate Editor for the *Bulletin of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics*, *Journal of Mathematical Analysis and Applications*, *Naval Research Logistics*, and *International Journal of Operations and Quantitative Management*. Dr. Baxter was a member of the Royal Statistical Society, the American Statistical Society, and the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences.

He was a superb lecturer and directed six Ph.D. students who are now employed in industry and academia throughout the world. His students and colleagues will remember his fondly for his warmth, dedication, and brilliant wit.

Dr. Baxter was a longtime supporter of the Royal Shakespeare Company and was deeply interested in and knowledgeable about Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Restoration drama as well as English literature. In addition, he was a great aficionado of art film and served a year-long stint as a film reviewer on public radio.

A memorial fund has been established at the University of New York at Stony Brook to endow a lecture series in Dr. Baxter's honor. Donations may be sent, payable to Stony Brook Foundation—Laurence Baxter Memorial Lecture Fund, in care of Dr. Nancy Mendell, Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics, SUNY—Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York 11794-3600.

Laurence Baxter is survived by his wife, Deborah Miller, of New York City and Head of the Harbor, New York; his parents, Herbert and Beatrice Baxter; his brother and sister, Michael Baxter and Gillian Miller; and three nephews, who reside in England.

George Leitmann
University of California